

The President's Daily Brief

4 September 1969

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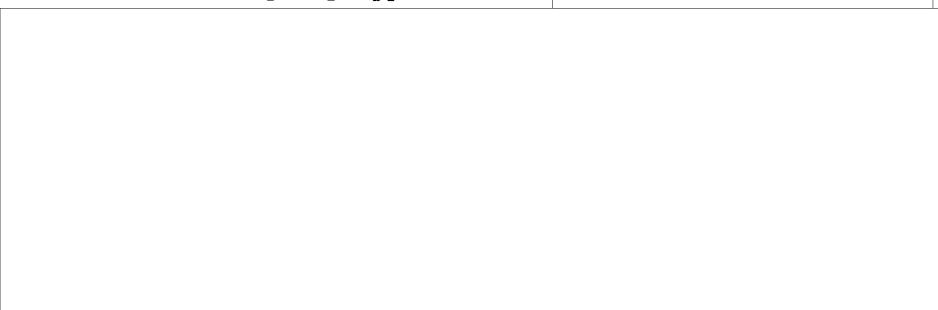
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VIETNAM

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Some tactical military shifts by the new North Vietnamese leadership may appear soon.

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There are no signs yet, however, that any shift has actually begun. [redacted] intercepts in fact indicate that as recently as Wednesday some units were still under orders to attack.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA

The carefully staged campaign to discredit Dubcek, Smrkovsky, and Cernik seems about to come to a climax. A plenary meeting of the party's central committee is scheduled for this month--it may in fact have begun already. The plenum will give Husak the opportunity to send the three men into political oblivion, as Moscow has long demanded.

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COMMUNIST CHINA



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SOVIET AFFAIRS

Recent satellite photography of the Kazan airframe plant shows a new prototype supersonic swing-wing bomber. The aircraft is about 140 feet long, has an extended wing span of about 105 feet, and apparently is powered by two engines mounted in the fuselage. It can be expected to undergo four to six years of testing before it is ready for operational service. This is the first evidence that the Soviets are working on a new strategic bomber.

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Satellite photography has also disclosed a Y-class (Polaris equivalent) submarine at the Komsomolsk shipyard in the Soviet Far East. This confirms earlier estimates that Y-class units are in production at Komsomolsk as well as at Severodvinsk in European Russia, where nine of this class have been launched so far.

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Continued unfavorable weather dims the outlook for the Soviet grain harvest this year. Cool weather delayed planting and retarded crop development during the spring and summer in the European USSR, while crops in the New Lands were harmed during June and July by hot, dry weather. More recently, excessive rain and wind have delayed and

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complicated harvesting. Only one-third of the crop, rather than the usual one-half, had been harvested by late August. Unprecedented effort and good weather will be needed throughout September to assure a satisfactory harvest.

MIDDLE EAST

The Lebanese Government's ability to curb the fedayeen based on its territory--already questionable--is diminishing as fedayeen strength grows.

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[Redacted]
Israeli

warnings to Lebanon about fedayeen attacks probably will be ineffective.

The Israelis mounted another air strike against fedayeen bases on Mount Hermon yesterday.

LAOS

Vang Pao's guerrillas have occupied most of the Plaine des Jarres and have also made significant gains to the north of it.

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The ease of Vang Pao's advance suggests that the Communists were not preparing for a major drive west of Muong Soui,

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as government leaders feared. The virtual absence of any Communist response, in fact, adds weight to claims of local villagers that large numbers of North Vietnamese left the Plain last month. There is little reason to doubt, however, that when the weather begins to improve in October the Communists will not only undo Vang Pao's effort but will also cut deeper into the government's overextended lines.

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